

Message Text

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ACTION VOE-00

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SCA-01 CIAE-00 FBIE-00 INSE-00

NSAE-00 CU-04 CPR-01 /017 W

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R 051045Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3737

INFO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

UNCLAS ABU DHABI 0017

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: CVIS TC

SUBJ: VISAS FOR UAE STUDENTS IN U.S.

1. MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS GHUBBASH RAISED WITH ME JANUARY 4 QUESTION OF VISAS FOR UAE STUDENTS IN UNITED STATES. GHUBBASH SAID HE WAS NOT SEEKING ANY KIND OF SPECIAL TREATMENT FOR UAE STUDENTS BUT HE DID FEEL STRONGLY THAT UAE STUDENTS SHOULD NOT HAVE TREATMENT IN ANY WAY LESS FAVORABLE THAN THAT EXTENDED TO OTHER FOREIGN STUDENTS. HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT HERE IS BEGINNING TO GET COMPLAINTS FROM ITS STUDENTS IN THE U.S. WHO KNOW THAT SAUDI STUDENTS HAVE A-2 VISAS AND ARE THEREBY GETTING DIPLOMATIC PRIVILEGES. I TOLD GHUBBASH THAT I AGREED WITH HIM FULLY ON HIS POINT ABOUT EQUALITY OF TREATMENT AND I KNEW WASHINGTON WAS WORKING ON THE PROBLEM. I HOPED TO HAVE SOMETHING TO REPORT TO HIM SOON.

2. IN MEETING JAN 5 BETWEEN EMBOFFS (DCM AND CONSULAR OFFICER) AND MFA OFFICIALS INCLUDING UNDER SECRETARY ABDULLAH MAZRU'I AND SAEED AL-SHAMSI, SECOND SECRETARY, UAE EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON, QUESTION OF APPROPRIATE VISAS FOR UAE STUDENTS WAS AGAIN SUBJECT CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION. IN ADDITION TO MAKING POINT RE EQUALITY OF TREATMENT (INCLUDING FACT THAT

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WHILE MATTER AWAITS RESOLUTION IN WASHINGTON, UAE STUDENTS

DEFINITELY NOT RPT NOT GETTING TREATMENT EQUAL TO SAUDIS AND KUWAITIS), MFA OFFICIALS, WITH SHAMSI ACTING AS PRIMARY SPOKESMAN, STRESSED SOME OF UNIQUE PROBLEMS FACED BY UAE STUDENTS AND BY UAE EMBASSY IN HANDLING THEM. SHAMSI DID NOT ARGUE THAT UAE STUDENTS QUALIFIED BY DEFINITION FOR A-2 VISAS OR DESIRED PRIVILEGES ATTENDANT THERETO, BUT HE STRESSED DIFFICULTIES WHICH F-1 RESTRICTIONS IMPOSE--PARTICULARLY PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN SWITCHING UAE STUDENTS FROM ONE UNIVERSITY TO ANOTHER. SHAMSI POINTED OUT DIFFICULTY UAE EMBASSY HAD IN FINDING PROPER ATMOSPHERE AND CONDITIONS FOR ITS GENERALLY UNSOPHISTICATED AND INEXPERIENCED STUDENTS. SHAMSI INDICATED THAT DEPT HAD SHOWN SYMPATHY FOR THESE PROBLEMS AND CITED SPECIFICALLY THE CONSIDERATION BEING GIVEN TO APPLYING "J" CATEGORY TO ARABIAN PENSINSLA STUDENTS (STATE 294704). SHAMSI INDICATED THAT THIS WOULD BE FULLY SATISFACTORY TO UAE, ASSUMING OF COURSE THAT OTHERS TREATED THE SAME. HE ONLY HOPED THAT DECISION COULD BE TAKEN SOON, ENDING PRESENT SITUATION IN WHICH UAE FINDS BOTH (A) ITS STUDENTS TREATED UNEQUALLY AND (B) ITS EMBASSY FACED WITH SERIOUS ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS IN HANDLING STUDENT PLACEMENT.

3. UAE POSITION ON THIS MATTER STRIKES US AS BEING FULLY REASONABLE. CERTAINLY THE NEED FOR EQUAL TREATMENT IS OBVIOUS AND REQUIRES NO FURTHER COMMENT. WE SUPPORT FULLY THE POINTS MADE AT LENGTH ON THIS SUBJECT ALREADY BY EMBASSY DOHA. PLEASE LET US KNOW SOONEST RPT SOONEST WHAT DECISION WASHINGTON HAS REACHED TO PROVIDE EQUITABLE TREATMENT FOR ARAB PENINSULA STUDENTS.

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